

District / Cluster Coordinating Committees

South Gippsland Shire Council is investigating the value of establishing District Coordinating committees across the Shire that include a number of neighbouring towns, villages and rural communities. Such coordinating groups have the potential to be of significant value to both local communities and Council.

For example:

- Help small communities in particular to undertake larger and more complex initiatives that could be undertaken by their individual communities,
- Access a higher level of external and local grant funds and provide support across the locality in times of difficulty or crisis,
- Create effective avenues for communities to partner with and advise Council on local matters / priorities.
- Provide an avenue for other agencies with work that involves a number of communities e.g. water authorities, VicRoads, to readily access representatives from a number of communities with a common interest,
- Support a group of communities to collaborate on prioritising works that can be included in an external grant - e.g. such local collaboration could be useful if the 'Pick My Project' initiative is continued.

Council knows that informal collaboration is already undertaken by towns and communities across South Gippsland for specific purposes from time to time. This has happened when Council and local communities have implemented externally funded development projects such as;

- the Community Recovery activities in the Mirboo North district after the 2009 fires.
- the Hills To Sea Community Building project (2006-2010) that included Poowong, Bena, Nyora and Loch, plus 5 small communities in the northern portion of Bass Coast Shire.
- Eastern Districts Community Strengthening Project (2007-2010) that included Toora, Mt Best, Welshpool, Port Welshpool, Hedley and Port Franklin.
- The Lower Tarwin Valley, Strengthening Small Dairy Communities project (2011-2014) that included all communities in postcode 3956, plus Fish Creek and Koonwarra.

All these projects developed useful local activities, and proved effective in improving the partnership between these communities and Council, particularly with supporting local contribution to the development of Urban Design Frameworks and Structure Plans. However none led to the establishment of an ongoing, independent district coordinating group that continued after the local Project Facilitator role had ended.

Council has convened meetings of all communities involved from time to time when there is an issue specific to that area to discuss.

Key elements to consider in the establishment of new district coordinating networks include;

1. Would District / Cluster coordinating committees / networks be a useful development / initiative for South Gippsland?

If you think they could be helpful then Council needs advice on the following issues;

2. Where do individual South Gippsland communities see their natural connections / which communities naturally have reasons to work together on a regular basis?
3. What should the make up of such groups be?
 - Would they include volunteer / not for profit groups
 - Short term special interest / specific issue project groups
 - Could an individual, who is not part of an existing organisation be a member of a cluster committee
 - Should membership exclude organisations who are primarily established to serve a wider area than the local district.
4. What level of obligation would there be on individual communities included in a District / Cluster to support majority choice projects?
5. Would communities accept the role of a cluster in determining / making decisions?
6. Would such committees be expected to play a direct role in allocation of Council resources?

Potential Districts / Clusters

Council includes seven districts in the Blueprint for Social and Community Infrastructure. Council is also broken into three wards, and promotes data and a separate suite of 8 districts. However, these Clusters do not include towns / communities outside of Council boundaries that might have a significant impact on the social, recreational and commercial life of a cluster.



Open Forums - Your Invitation

To assist with this discussion, Council is holding seven open forums across the Shire in late October. Individuals, and representatives from community groups are welcome to attend any of the sessions - it doesn't have to be the one closest to where you live, or your group is based.

You can also let us know your thoughts and ideas on the proposal by writing / emailing Council's Coordinator of Community Strengthening, Ned Dennis

post: SGSC, Private Bag 4, Leongatha 3953

email: nedd@southgippsland.vic.gov.au

You can also contact members of the Community Strengthening team for information or discussion on 5662 9200

TOWN	TIME	DATE	VENUE
Nyora	7pm - 8:30pm	Monday 22 October	Nyora Hall / Community Centre
Ruby	5:30pm - 7pm	Wednesday 24 October	Ruby Hall
Tarwin Lower	5:30pm - 7pm	Friday 26 October	Tarwin Lower Mechanics Institute <i>Supper Room</i>
Fish Creek	7pm - 8:30pm	Monday 29 October	Fish Creek Memorial Hall <i>Supper Room</i>
Mirboo North	7pm - 8:30pm	Tuesday 30 October	Baromi Centre <i>Former Senior Citizens Centre in Baromi Park</i>
Koonwarra	7pm - 8:30pm	Wednesday 31 October	Koonwarra Hall
Toora	7pm - 8:30pm	Thursday 1 November	Toora Hall <i>Supper Room</i>

